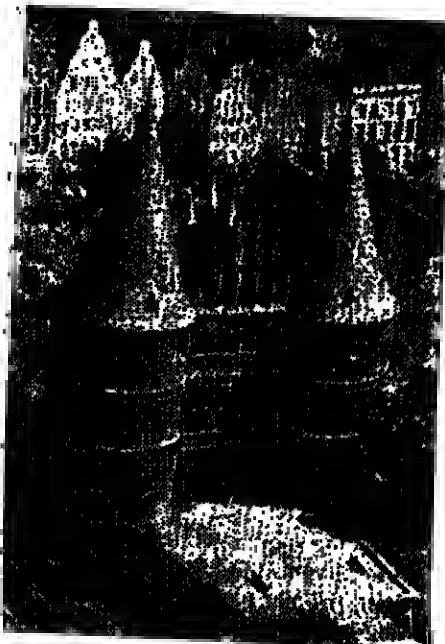


# Routes to tour in Germany The German Holiday Route — from the Alps to the Baltic



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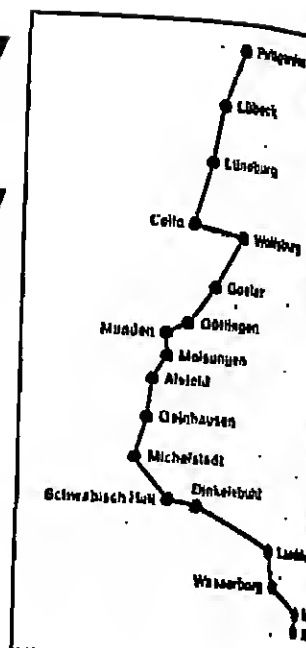
Start in the south with Berchtesgaden and its bob run. Maybe you have already heard tell of Landshut, a mediaeval Bavarian town with the world's largest brick-and-mortar tower. Or of Erbach in the Odenwald, with its castle and the Ivory Museum. Or of Alsfeld with its half-timbered houses, the Harz mountain towns or the 1,000-year-old Hanseatic port of Lübeck.

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## The German Tribune

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### Stuttgart summit a sort of success

It is still annoying that countless summit sessions and meetings of the EEC Council of Ministers are confronted time and again with demands made by Britain's Iron Lady.

But much of the blame lies with Britain's partners, not with Mrs Thatcher. The EEC, originally designed to meet the requirements of the Six, has been due to undergo changes ever since Britain joined 10 years ago.

For the past 10 years the Common Market countries have promised to reify the European Community. In such a way that Britain derives adequate benefit from membership.

Yet the Common Agricultural Policy still accounts for two thirds of the European Community's DM52bn budget, and Britain derives very little benefit from CAP.

The promised refig has failed to materialise because the Ten no longer have common objectives, but now the EEC is on the brink of insolvency they will have to reach a decision.

Bonn would sooner economise, and that was the declared policy line to be followed at the Stuttgart summit. But everyone knows that savings, even on CAP, are not enough.

The European Community can only



All smiles at Stuttgart. In front from left, Irish Prime Minister Garret FitzGerald, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, Bonn Chancellor Helmut Kohl and French President François Mitterrand. Behind, Foreign Ministers Claude Cheysson (France), Sir Geoffrey Howe (Britain) and Collette Fleesch (Luxembourg); Dutch Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers and Bonn Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher. (Photo: dpa)

make genuine headway by reaching agreement on its objectives, not just by piling percentages here and there.

This is a point Chancellor Kohl and Foreign Minister Genscher readily appreciate, but their tactical concept could only work if they insisted on economics as a precondition.

This they succeeded in doing at Stuttgart. All 10 heads of government undertook to cut Community expenditure, especially in the agricultural sector.

That alone was new in the history of the Common Market. It was combined with a bid — to which equal importance was attached — to consider fresh targets in the energy and research sectors.

On the face of it this second point means more expenditure by Brussels, but the EEC is merely to do what the Community can set about more effectively than an individual country, which is a sensible idea.

The most striking outcome of the Stuttgart summit was that a concentrated debate by the 10 heads of state and government, in whom great expectations were placed, can indeed accomplish results.

Previous EEC summits had given rise to doubts whether this was in fact the case.

The dual-track Stuttgart resolution was both to economise and to press ahead with further development of the European Community.

It remains to be seen whether this compromise will hold. Whether it does or not will certainly show whether the solemn declaration on European Union was worth the paper it was printed on.

Mrs Thatcher is to get her money. In return she had to give the go-ahead, as Bonn had already done, to all increase in the EEC budget.

It is now up to the Council of Ministers to put into effect the summit's decisions on economics that in many cases are extremely vaguely worded.

Maybe the intensive debate in Stuttgart will prompt heads of government to pay closer attention to what their Ministers get up to in the months ahead.

If Herr Kohl and his counterparts were to release their Ministers from this commitment to succeed in the months to come the Stuttgart summit would not have amounted to much.

All that would be left would be more money for the EEC but no rethink on EEC policy. Stuttgart started the ball rolling. The outcome is still uncertain.

Erich Hauser

(Westdeutsche Allgemeine, 26 June 1983)

Ulrich Löke  
(Die Welt, 26 June 1983)

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community, to impose genuine spend-

and to solve the problem of in's contribution to the EEC kitty.

each of the Ten has a different apt of the Common Market (assuming they all have clear ideas on the subject).

Thatcher made life difficult for opposite numbers again. Fresh from

at the polls she talked in terms of cash and not of future concepts

European Community.

He first insisted on Britain being

ursed DM3bn. The Ten eventually

ed, relatively fast by EEC stan-

on roughly half: DM1.7bn.

contradicted German ideas

of economics not expounded; it played the way to understanding

long-term issues.

was by no means a glorious victory

Mr Thatcher, who is to get back

than she did last year. The swift

ment was a definite improvement

spring's protracted negotiations.







(Der Tagesspiegel, 5. Juni 1983)



## The day the workers rebelled in the workers' Garden of Eden

Bricklayers and building workers on sites along Stalin-Allee in East Berlin triggered the uprising of East German workers against what was claimed to be the first workers' and peasants' state on German soil.

They downed tools on 16 June 1953 in protest against a 10-per-cent increase in work norms. Then they marched to the House of Ministers in Leipziger Strasse to demand a reduction in their workload.

There they clamoured to see either the Party leader, Walter Ulbricht, or the Prime Minister, Otto Grotewohl.

Both preferred discretion to valour and sent out Fritz Selbmann, the Minister, to deal with the demonstrators.

Suddenly political slogans were heard: calls for the resignation of the government and free elections. In less than 24 hours a wave of protest swept the entire country.

### Social unrest

The 17 June 1953 popular uprising was the culmination of social unrest that had been accumulating for years in the GDR.

In 1952 the average monthly earnings were a mere DM308, but that was a pitifully meagre sum in comparison with disability pensions that could be as low as DM65 a month.

The consumer goods industry was relegated to a back-seat role while steel and chemicals were given priority. Fat, meat and sugar were still rationed and many poor-quality consumer goods were too expensive for the ordinary working population.

Political justice was intensified to help establish socialism, with the result that political persecution forced more and more people to head west as refugees.

By the end of 1952 refugees were leaving the GDR at a rate of between 15,000 and 23,000 a month.

This crisis of the state was followed, on the death of Stalin, by a crisis in the Party, which had pursued an unwaveringly Stalinist course.

The personality cult was maintained in the GDR long after the wind had changed in the Soviet Union and the struggle for succession was in full swing.

Walter Ulbricht even intensified the Stalinist policy line by having the Council of Ministers issue a decree disqualifying members of certain professions from being given ration cards.

They included practising lawyers, retail traders, tax accountants and house-owners. The prices of meat, sausages, bakery products and jam were increased.

Increasing pressure was exerted on the Protestant Church. Pupils and students who belonged to the Church youth organisation were sent down from school or university.

In April 1953 the Church youth organisation was banned. In the first six months of 1953 the number of refugees who headed west totalled 426,000.

The straw that broke the camel's back was the decision by the Party central



Committee on 14 May to introduce an across-the-board 10-per-cent increase in work norms.

This decision was reached after appeals for workers to agree voluntarily to higher norms had gone unheard. In April and May there were strikes at the Zeiss works in Jena and the Wilhelm Pieck copper combine.

Yet despite strikes in these and many other factories Party members resolved at a conference of activists to enlist the support of their brigades for a 15-per-cent increase in norms.

The increasingly volatile and critical nature of public opinion in the GDR had prompted the Soviet Control Commission to sound out opinion in the winter of 1952.

Its findings were not relayed to the Party, which made a point of circulating only jubilant reports.

The result was catastrophic. People showed no interest in the Party's work. The workers took a hostile view of decrees imposed from above.

On instructions from Moscow the Party politbureau proclaimed a new course on 9 June 1953 and admitted that the Party and the government had made mistakes.

Ration cards were reissued to everyone. Price increases were repealed. The expropriation of refugee property was to be waived for refugees who chose to return.

Court sentences were to be reviewed and cases of undue harshness rectified. State and Church were to be reconciled.

This change of course demonstrated the helpless uncertainty of a Party and Party officials who despite the commu-

nist credo that the Party was always right now had to admit that mistakes had been made.

The most serious mistake was their decision not to wince the increase in norms, which was felt to have been absolutely right.

As the workers saw it, however, the new course had only benefited the "capitalists," whereas their homes for overfulfilment of the norm had been steadily cut.

The party leadership did not make up its mind to go back on this decision until the eve of the uprising, but by then it was too late to stem the tide.

In the evening on 16 June a delegation of Stalin-Allee building workers called at the RIAS radio station in West Berlin to ask for their demands to be transmitted.

What they wanted was wages paid on the basis of the old norms, cuts in the cost of living, free and secret elections and freedom from punishment for the strikers.

That evening workers in East Berlin discussed the idea of holding a general strike the next day. In the early hours of 17 June tens of thousands of workers marched round various thoroughfares of West Berlin and from the Brandenburg Gate to Marx-Engels-Platz in East Berlin.

Their resentment could no longer be held in check. The uprising began to take shape as the first acts of violence occurred.

At 11 a.m. the crowds roared approval as the Red Flag was lowered from the Brandenburg Gate and torn to shreds.

In East Berlin workers smashed Party offices and set newspaper kiosks on fire. The first Soviet tanks began to roll through the city streets.

The Russians sent reinforcements in and declared a state of emergency at 1

## Idea of German reunification has not been discarded

A recent opinion poll claims that only one West German in four still believes reunification will one day take place. If this finding is accurate, there would still be no cause for despondency and faint-heartedness.

Maybe it was because of the total collapse of the Reich in 1945 that West Germans over the past decades of reconstruction and recovery set aside ideas of reunification in favour of the striving for property and prosperity.

But it would be an act of self-denial if Germans in the Federal Republic were to abandon hope in view of the iron curtain between the ideological blocs and the slow pace of history.

Why should they give up the claim to reunification in peace and freedom merely because even in the medium term there is no likelihood of an improvement in the overall situation in Central Europe?

Political prospects of reunification unquestionably don't look promising at present, but it is illogical to infer from this fact that reunification is a total write-off.

### Kieler Nachrichten

Calls for 17 June to be scrapped as German Unity Day and replaced as a holiday by 23 May, the anniversary of Basic Law, the 1949 Bonn constitution, or 18 March, that of the 1848 revolution, imply in the final analysis that the division of Germany is final and irrevocable.

The GDR may have made it as difficult as possible to establish and maintain ties with East Germans, but visits are still possible.

If the idea of national unity is kept alive in the family, at school and by the media and others, the demand could assume political importance.

The 17 June 1953 popular uprising in the GDR is a constant reminder of this unnatural division and a symbol of intra-German solidarity.

Wolf Ullmann

(Kieler Nachrichten, 15 June 1983)

## CLIMATE

## Mystery of the vanishing carbon dioxide



Summer last year was long and hot in Central and Western Europe. So, in January, were autumn and winter.

The Party regained internal power, however, as it was able to power being backed by the military presence.

By September 1953 the even in a position to increase in work norms.

What had happened was out to have been a counter-ry attempted putsch that had under preparation at West-geance HQs.

This version is still the account of what went on 30 years ago.

### Literary club

The uprising also triggered a clash. Bertolt Brecht had the uprising and sent Walter declaration of solidarity, but able to stomach an appeal to the.

Barthel, who was first the GDR Writers' Association an appeal entitled "How Am" under his name-de-pla-

"Are you as ashamed as I am?" "You are going to be very hard and believe me, very hard if this disgrace is ever ten."

"Repairing houses that destroyed is easy. Restoring that has been destroyed is hard."

Brecht penned a sarcastic reply, entitled "The Solution."

"After the 17 June uprising of the Writers' Association, let's distributed on Stalinist claiming that the people had the government's confidence only regain it by working to."

"Would it not be easier for government to dissolve the vote itself another?"

While Soviet machine-guns ebbed round the streets of Bruno Leuschner, a politician, ber, is said by an eyewitness, asked, his face pale:

"The socialist camp, led by the Union, to which we too belong, sends the interests of the world. Can anyone tell me whose side I am on today? Were they who filled the streets today and being strided with gun fire?"

No-one answered. Despite time it took to crush the uprising, a demonstration of power and nation by the workers that was in Hungary in 1956, in Czechoslovakia in 1968 and in Poland today.

It continues to be a volatile that weighs heavily on the camp.

Cluter

(Kieler Nachrichten, 15 June 1983)

sent in either gas or liquid form, was not borne in mind.

Professor Fritz Möller of Munich University had drawn attention several years earlier to the following point:

"The effects of an increase in carbon dioxide from 300 to 330 parts per million can be offset to full without any change in temperature."

"All that is needed is either a three-per-cent change in the amount of water vapour in the atmosphere or a one-per-cent change in cloud quantity."

"So the theory that climatic changes will be triggered by changes in the carbon dioxide count in the atmosphere is extremely doubtful."

He was referring to feedback effects that are extremely difficult to record.

If the atmosphere grows hotter, for instance, more water will evaporate and there will be more cloud. The cloud will provide greater cover from solar radiation and change the radiation make-up of the atmosphere.

Feedback of this kind may heighten an effect; it may also scotch it down. In many cases scientists are not even sure how it works qualitatively, let alone quantitatively.

Professor Christinn Junge, the former head of the department of atmospheric chemistry at the Max Planck Chemistry Institute in Mainz, was certainly right when he wrote that:

"Mankind is in the process of conducting a major, unintentional geochemical experiment, that of feeding back into the atmosphere in a short space of geological time the fossil fuels that have slowly accumulated over the past 500 million years, having taken shape via photosynthesis from atmospheric carbon dioxide."

What happens to all the carbon dioxide? That's what scientists are wondering too. Forecasts have grown much more cautious now new computer models have incorporated at least part of this feedback.

Comparison of the amount of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere and the actual increase has shown that only 35 per cent is still up there; the remaining 65 per cent is somewhere else.

Classical theory has it that roughly half this carbon dioxide is absorbed by the oceans and the biomass.

German research findings seem to bear out longstanding assumptions of the earth's climate is influenced, and in the long term, by changes in the planet's orbit round the Sun.

A Yugoslav astronomer, Milutin Milankovich, suggested as long ago as at the turn of the century that such changes might account for successive ice ages and warmer periods.

His hunch is supported by the findings of a research group coordinated by Professor Johann Michael

Heilmann-Lohle of Kiel University. The group, who form part of a major German climatic research programme, have come up with high-grade data indicating a surprisingly accurate correspondence between ocean temperature and solar radiation over the past 10,000 years.

In mathematical terms there is only a slight possibility that this corre-

spondence might be merely coincidental.

If Milankovich's theory of an astronomically-triggered ice age rhythm were confirmed, future climate trends (certainly those that depended on changes in our terrestrial orbit) could be calculated well in advance.

The scientists are analysing seabed sediment over the past three-and-a-half million years in a bid to chart a detailed history of the world's climate.

Their findings will, they hope, be of use in drawing up new climatic models and in long-range weather forecasting.

Prevailing sea water temperatures are

This is where an explanation attempted by Professor Hermann Flohn of Bonn University comes in. He outlined it in a paper read to the German Meteorological Association in Offenbach.

Recent research shows that the ocean's carbon dioxide intake capacity is not constant; it varies in accordance with surface water temperature.

Much more carbon dioxide seems to be absorbed when the extensive waters on either side of the equator grow colder.

This occurs, Professor Flohn says, when cold water surges up from the ocean depths, sending billions of micro-organisms, vegetable plankton, to the surface.

The plankton bring about a dramatic increase in the ocean's capacity to absorb carbon dioxide.

As Professor Flohn pointed out in the 7/81 issue of *Physikalische Blätter*, a scientific journal, this process is triggered by a hemispherical feedback when temperatures fall in the polar regions.

When temperatures fall up north (or down south) the ice and snow lines advance, the temperature gap between the equator and the polar regions widens, thermic circulation and wind speed increase and there is a greater upsurge of deep-sea water at the equator.

The accompanying decline in atmospheric water vapour and carbon dioxide count leads to a worldwide process of cooling-down that is especially marked in the polar areas, thereby bringing the feedback process round full-circle.

The increase in equatorial wind speed makes its mark on the trade winds. Once they slow down the entire process swings into reverse.

The upsurge of ocean water is reversed, with the result that surface water temperatures increase.

Professor Flohn's findings indicate that during cold spells the ocean absorbs about one billion tonnes, or roughly 20 per cent of the total current output of fossil carbon.

During hot periods it releases a corresponding amount of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

Extremely complex processes are involved, and little is known about the complicated interaction between the ocean and the atmosphere.

A fair number of experts nonetheless believe that further research will not only find out what happens to the remaining carbon dioxide.

It will also make headway, possibly crucial progress, toward a solution of the problems of long-term weather forecasting.

Heinz Panzram/dl  
(Mannheimer Morgen, 9 June 1983)

## Lightning still strikes, but more leisurely

Eight people were killed by a single bolt of lightning in Austria when a raging thunderstorm sent them scurrying for cover under an oak tree.

That was a bad idea. There is even a proverb in German that says *Vor Elchen sollst Du weichen*, or Steer clear of oak trees.

Trees of any kind are the wrong place in a thunderstorm.

There has been a marked decline in the number of deaths from lightning all over Europe in the past few decades.

Summer thunder and lightning are more common in the mountains than by the sea. In the plains of northern Germany there are thunderstorms on 15 to 25 days a year, as against 25 to 35 down south.

There are roughly 50 thunderstorms a year in Munich as against a mere 15 or so in Kiel. Bavaria has the highest number of lightning accidents in Germany: 24 last year.

Elsewhere the average number is four or less, except in Schleswig-Holstein, where even though there is least thunder and lightning 10 accidents were surprisingly reported in 1982.

But that, say accident statisticians and research workers in Kiel, the state capital, was sheer coincidence.

Over the past 30 years there has been a striking decline in the number of lightning deaths in the Federal Republic of Germany.

In 1953 there were 44 lightning fatalities in the Federal Republic. In 1955 fifty-four people were struck by lightning and died as a result.

For the past 10 years the average number of lightning deaths in Germany has been eight. The decline is partly attributed to more people travelling by car and fewer walking or cycling.

The metal shell of the motor-car forms a Faraday's cage that conducts the lightning round its outer surface, thereby protecting the driver and passengers.

Last year there were 42 accidents in which people were killed or injured. All occurred outside. Two thirds were in open country or under trees.

Lightning is no respecter of trees. It is just a likely to strike at a beech as it is at an oak, even though another proverb counsels travellers to shelter under a beech tree.

Lightning strikes at tensions of up to 100 million volts, with current running at between 20,000 and 40,000 amperes in the main channel.

Yet despite the rumble or crash of thunder, the flash of lightning and these impressive figures, if a flash of lightning were harnessed, it would only yield about 100 kilowatts.

That is roughly the amount of electricity a family of four uses in a fortnight or, put another way, a mere five-thousandth of the hourly output of a large coal-fired power station.

If you are caught in the open by a thunderstorm the best bet is to steer a wide berth of trees and mink for a hollow in the ground.

Then go down on to your haunches and wait. Don't lie down and don't touch other people or animals. Keep a safe distance of several yards from metal of any kind.

Alfons Ohndt  
(Stuttgarter Nachrichten, 11 June 1983)

## Key to why there are ice ages may lie out in space

Continued on page 10



## ■ AVIATION

## Rickshaws for Taiwan or cattle for China, it's all air freight

The history of air freight is almost as old as that of aviation. Important items for special delivery have been airmailed round the world since the early years of the century.

Air freight is currently estimated to account for roughly three per cent of international goods traffic.

But this seemingly insignificant figure refers to the tonnage, not to the value of the goods carried, which is nearer 20 per cent of the total.

The main categories of goods sent by air include machinery, chemical and pharmaceutical products and electrical and electronic goods.

Just about everything has been flown, however, except for bulk cargoes.

Three years ago a complete hospital was flown from France to Zimbabwe. In India an airline has been known to take on rickshaws for Taiwan, then 20 live dolphins for customers in the Federal Republic of Germany.

German Cargo Services, a Lufthansa subsidiary that specialises in shipping animals, flew a killer whale from Frankfurt to Hong Kong in 1980. It recently flew 200 head of cattle to China.

Air freight is expensive but widely used by industry. It is swift and gets the goods to their destination in good shape.

The extra expense can be offset to some extent by savings in packaging

and crating. Safety and low losses and wastage cut insurance costs.

So banks regularly air freight securities, gold and diamonds.

In 1982 air freight flown out of the Federal Republic totalled 417,000 tonnes, an increase of 0.5 per cent. Incoming air freight was down 4.3 per cent to 358,000 tonnes.

This drop is said mainly to have been due to economic recession.

Internationally, air freight totals roughly 14 million tonnes a year, and much of the credit must be given to aircraft manufacturers.

Thirty years ago the holds of large propeller aircraft could hold only about 10 tonnes of crates and bags.

Three times as much will fit into the holds of a fully-laden present-day jumbo jet: space-savingly arranged and often containerised.

In response to airline demand the manufacturers (Boeing, McDonnell Douglas and Airbus Industrie) have developed both jumbo cargo planes and combination passenger and cargo aircraft.

They carry passengers in one section of the main deck and freight in another. These hybrids, with their cargoes of passengers and containers, are used by some carriers on routes that would be uneconomic for passengers or freight alone.

Air freight rates are as varied and in-

tricate as passenger fares are. The US open-skies policy has definitely led to lower rates.

Companies that fly freight only and were banking on continued expansion have been hard-hit as a result.

Cargolux, Flying Tiger and others have hit hard times because their planes were equipped for freight only and served fewer routes than passenger airlines.

In Germany and Europe it is usually cheaper to ship goods by road, rail or inland waterways than by air, possibly excepting perishable or fragile cargoes.

On intercontinental routes, say to or from North America or Asia, air freight can be cheaper than sending goods by ship.

This presupposes that every advantage is gained from the fierce competition between airlines. Rates in the same category often vary.

They are almost sure to vary from destination to destination and to depend on the size of the cargo. The outcome includes some strange anomalies.

A typical result of the air freight jungle is that it can cost no more to send goods across the North Atlantic than, say, from Germany to Spain.

Ground transshipment facilities are a key factor in determining whether air freight is economic. Satisfactory arrangements are expensive.

Specialised systems are needed to ensure swift on- and off-loading of containers and pallets.

Many airports are in serious trouble because they have to handle passengers, luggage and bulky items at the same terminals.

The 14,000-square-metre (3.5-acre) Lufthansa cargo centre at Frankfurt am Main shows how such problems can be solved.

It was opened last year after 12 years

of planning and construction. Rates having initially been raised.

It is claimed to be the most up-to-date air freight terminal facility in the world. Its capacity is 425,000 tonnes a year.

The headlong growth in air freight has made it uneconomic to move over to collect or deliver air freight is often not flown to its destination.

It is cheaper to fly it to a freight centre and then forward by road or rail to its destination.

This combination has enabled airlines to offer very low rates on routes.

It may be worth the sender's sending air freight by road to London or Belgium and have it flown there. Air freight flown from land can sometimes be cheaper from Germany too.

From 500kg air cargo from land to South Africa costs DM6.50 per kilo. From Germany it costs DM11.

Lufthansa board chairman Ruhnau stressed at the Frankfurt he gave to mark publication of the annual accounts that the business still waiting to be freight.

Exports might be declining but they were increasing in said. So freight rates were not overriding consideration they be.

Sending goods by air freight tie up capital for us long as them by sea did, and that was heavily than cheaper rates exporters.

Herr Ruhnau also mentioned growing division of labour in international companies, which ship parts fast from one factory in different countries.

All in all, air freighters took a pessimistic view of the outlook.

Air freight still had much to make in gaining confidence in whereas in the United States lots of individual items were sent freight as a matter of course.

Klaus W. (Köln: Stadt-Anzeiger, 1983)

## THE ARTS

## Fassbinder case: creativity and drugs conundrum

Which film-maker Rainer Werner Fassbinder, who died last year of cocaine poisoning, never any secret of his taste for narcotics.

He made the point clearly in his self-portrait in the 1978 film *Deutschland im Herbst*. Dr Felix Treiter, writing in the latest issue of *Deutsches Ärzteblatt*, a medical journal, wonders whether there is any link between drugs and creativity.

In an article entitled Fassbinder the Genius: Creativity via Drugs? he includes that there is none.

Fassbinder, he writes, would have been a genius regardless whether he took drugs or not. If he had not, he would of course have lived, to accomplish more.

Treiter works at a psychiatric clinic. His aim in writing the article was to oppose the widespread tendency in certain sectors to claim that drug-taking is indispensable.

Rock groups, for instance, tend to take narcotics as a must, and many subscribe to the dangerous view that drugs boost creativity.

Fassbinder did too. Dr Treiter quotes as saying in 1980 that he was convinced Rimbaut's creative period was due to marijuana.

But, he felt, had only been able to write his *Au recherche du temps perdu* after taking some drug or other.

He was also said to have been able to make certain discoveries while under the influence of cocaine.

All told I should say," he said, "that the influence of drugs could well be a myth on one the arts."

Marcel Proust, 1871-1922, died aged 51. The fifth part of his novel did not appear until three years after his death. Jean Arthur Rimbaud, 1854-1891, died at 37. But his poems were written between 1870 and 1873.

Fassbinder died at 36. Dr Treiter is of

the opinion that by 1980, when he gave the interview just quoted, he was no longer capable of controlling his drug consumption.

"This mistaken opinion had fatal consequences," he writes. Fassbinder was a case of polytoxicomania, a user of several drugs simultaneously.

He is said to have taken cocaine intensively from 1976. Some time earlier he had come into contact with hashish and used uppers and downers to keep his feelings under control.

Alcohol and nicotine had been important drugs for Fassbinder since youth.

Dr Treiter does not rule out the possibility of having good ideas under the influence of drugs, "but it has dreadful consequences; for days afterwards the chemistry of the brain is in total disarray."

He is strongly opposed to what he calls the glorification of the effect of drug-taking that is even encountered in scientific literature.

"On the one hand the drug-related tragedy of the usually short lives of creative people who have taken drugs, at least for a while, is stressed."

"On the other, work by, say, Freud that is reputed to have been done in connection with drug-taking is usually simply described as impressive, with no further critical consideration."

"There is seldom any comparison made between the innovational value of such work and the quality of work done in periods of slight or zero drug consumption."

"In this way it is easy to gain the impression that hard drugs hold the key to a shorter but more intensive creative life."

Dr Treiter proves his point in a chronology of Fassbinder's creativity. In 17 years Fassbinder made 40 films and also wrote, produced, acted and worked as a stage director.



The late Rainer Werner Fassbinder... drug taking out of control.

(Photo: Rudolf Dierich)

There were, Dr Treiter writes, four periods in Fassbinder's life when he went through a particularly creative phase.

The first, he argues, began in 1969 when Fassbinder hit the headlines with his melodrama about the life of a migrant worker, *Katzelmacher*.

It won him a TV award and the Federal film award in gold for the screenplay and his work as director and producer of the film.

During this first burst of creativity Fassbinder is said to have acted seven parts, directed six plays, made seven films and written two radio plays and a screenplay.

Dr Treiter lists 23 creative activities, a total he never again reached in such a short period. He was 23 and probably at his creative peak.

The second period is said to have been in 1972 and 1973 and to have comprised nine films and three plays. It was arguably the time at which his creativity as a film-maker was at its peak.

They included *Angst essen Seele auf* (Fear Eats the Soul), premiered in March 1974, the tale of a love affair between an ageing German charlady and a migrant worker from Morocco.

His film version of Theodor Fonta-

ne's novel *Emt Brest* was also a major success.

The third period, from 1975 to 1976, included seven very distinctive films, such as *Satanstoebe*, but none of them were very successful.

In 1977 Fassbinder's creative fortunes were at a low ebb. He made only three films and at one stage planned to move to Hollywood.

The fourth and final phase lasted until his death on 10 June 1982. It included his 13-part serialised TV version of Alfred Döblin's 1920s novel *Berlin Alexanderplatz* and his box-office success *Lili Marleen*.

It also included films such as *Deutschland im Herbst* and his final film, *Querelle*.

"This final creative period," Dr Treiter writes, "included increasing uniformity of films in form and content... Several critics took a dim view of the aesthetics of his last films, so he cannot be said to have reached a pinnacle in his career as a film-maker during this final stage."

A further point Dr Treiter feels worth mentioning is that the team he worked with for so many years grew increasingly capable, with the result that Fass-

Continued on page 12

## Meteorological stations all over the world



supplied the data arranged in second-at-a-glance tables in these new reference works. They include details of air and water temperature, precipitation, humidity, sunshine, physical stress of climate, wind conditions and frequency of thunderstorms.

These figures compiled over the years are invaluable both for planning journeys to distant countries, and for scientific research.

Basic facts and figures for every country in the world form a preface to the tables. The emphasis is on the country's natural statistics, on climate, population, trade and transport.

The guides are handy in size and flexibly bound. Indispensable for daily use in commerce, industry and the travel trade.

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Continued from page 8

most section testifies to a change in pole of the earth's magnetic field.

In the paleomagnetic time scale this change is known as the Brunhes-Matuyama event and is felt to have occurred about 730,000 years ago.

Radiometric dating of the uppermost section of the core showed it to be about 150,000 years old.

Despite these fairly definite dates the intermediate sections of the core could not be evenly divided and dated accordingly.

Seabed sediment had accumulated evenly over the past 750,000 years or so but part of the layer from the original sediment had been dissolved out during cold spells.

So its original quantity had to be reassessed before a reliable time scale could be drawn up.

Only then was a comparison possible, and it showed a surprising degree of correspondence between astronomical solar radiation and ocean temperatures at any given time.

The sediment also revealed further details of climatic changes from ice ages to warmer spells and vice versa.

Lime started to be dissolved out of the seabed sediment thousands of years before the ice age was at its coldest, presumably because deep-sea Antarctic

water heeded further and further. This was able to do because the waters were already cold in the layer of ice that prevented the melting of reserves of deep-sea water.

There was thus nothing to tide of Antarctic waters flowing in. Course-grained desert dust from the Sahara continued to be blown in Atlantic for long after the peak of the age.

This will have been because south winds continued to blow in shrinking expanses of inland ice. These deep-sea data on ocean temperatures in the geological past are crucial importance for long-range forecasting, but they cannot be put to any real use.

No-one knows yet which ice ages and warmer periods correspond to specific ice ages and interglacial periods on dry land.

There is no way in which oceanic deep-sea data can be used to forecast continental climatic changes, especially glacier movements.

This is an extremely tricky question. It should keep scientists busy for time yet.

Dr Harald Stauder  
(Münchener Morgenpost, 1983)

## Showing the 20th Century as it really wasn't

dingly. Structural phenomena go unnoticed.

The evolution of basic rights or the trade unions, the role of the Catholic and Protestant churches, women's lib or changes in leisure pursuits go unmentioned.

There is naturally not enough time to convey an 'anywhere, near distinctive idea of what are claimed to be the 40 highlights of the century.

A few shorts are all the attention that is paid to Revolution in Germany, Léon Trotsky and John McCloy, to name but three.

As there is no inclination to engage in analysis the 'audience' learn nothing about why Hitler came to power or why, for instance, the United States fought in Vietnam.

There is not even a gleaming to be gained from the DM60 catalogue, which is a poor accompaniment to the whirl of images.

Despite these drawbacks the aim, ac-

cording to Harenberg, is "to make history tangible for people who want to know why what happened happened and what we can learn from it."

All the audience gets is a few calculated sensations.

Three screens featuring different pictures and soundtracks illustrate the various topics, but the effect is not to provide an 'informative' and 'illuminating contrast as occasionally intended.

One's eyes constantly wander from one screen to another in a bid to miss nothing worthwhile.

On the left there is the Tsar and Tsarina, on the right Lenin in exile and in the middle the suffering soldiers in the field.

It is literally a slight for sore eyes and a strain not only on the neck muscles but also on powers of concentration.

The spectacular can certainly not be termed serious. Instead of an allegedly competent review of the century we are fed merely fine words.

If the organisers are to be believed, what should be constantly amazed by what is billed as the event of the century, a unique sound and screen documentation and in every respect a sensation.

Monumenta 83, which threatens to feature further reviews of history in the years to come, somewhat typically claims to have the largest poster in the world.

It is surely surprising that the chronicle of the 20th century should be on offer with 17 years of the century still to go.

The idea was based on a book of the same title, and the organisers evidently wanted to market their version as soon as possible, come what might in the remaining years of the century.

To give the audience at least some sensation of what the future may hold in store, the final scene, backed up by laser rays and disco fog, features a time tunnel.

What the tunnel then reveals is less informative than the message screened in gigantic letters just beforehand.

"You," they proclaim, "are the 20th century." Monumenta 83 certainly isn't.

Martin Ohlen  
(Frankfurter Neue Presse, 9 June 1983)



## The foreign influences that go to make up the modern Germany

During the recent CDU party congress in Cologne, Germans were warned about an alleged danger of a "national and cultural" loss of identity.

The speaker was Alfred Dregger, chairman of the party's parliamentary group. His language fitted in with the motto of the congress, which was: Let's change things, now!

Dregger was thinking about the millions of Turks in Germany as he spoke.

For him, "the protection of the national and cultural identity of our nation by limiting the number of foreigners from alien culture groups" is one of the big tasks facing at least conservative politicians.

A disturbing and unfortunate turn of phrase. Particularly since this kind of talk will back up all those in Germany who think in the black and white terms such as "alien" and "native". And there are plenty who do.

Such words of warning can arouse notions which have lumbered for many years. The choice of words could have been more careful.

Mistrust and xenophobia lie dormant in many minds.

Dregger's party colleagues expressed their gratitude for his forthright statements by applauding him strongly.

After all, he had differentiated his words somewhat by offering them a kind of cultural priority list. Austrians, Swiss and even those from South Tyrol (they're welcome to "settle down in our midst"). Indeed, they represent an "enrichment".

Even Italians, Spaniards, Poles and French are welcome, providing they have become assimilated, as they belong to the "Christian culture group".

Muslims, i.e. the non-Occidentals, do not, however, fit into Dregger's picture unless they are "integrated and assimilated".

What did the former Lord Mayor of Fulda mean when he spoke of the "cultural identity of our nation"? Religion, perhaps, or language, morals, art, philosophy, everyday (and Sunday) life — the whole cultural civilisation of central Europe?

And what does "identity" mean in this context?

Anyone who thinks seriously about cultural phenomena, relations and sti-

mulations will soon find that he must ban such concepts as "identity" into the realm of culturally chauvinist illusion.

The artificially created contrast, "cultural identity" here and "alien culture group" there, is just as invalid for Germany as it is for other European and non-European countries.

Openness has always produced the best cultural achievements, whereas protectionism and delimitation — both expressions of weakness — have led to isolation, incest and finally to desolation.

The large numbers of Islamic worshippers in Germany have led to greater social friction. However, to insist on the "cultural identity of our nation" would only exacerbate problems.

Anyone who sets up barriers does nothing to help improve the relations between social groups.

Lively discussion, on the other hand, can remove barriers and in the long run do more to enrich cultural life in Germany.

This also applies to those — whether Turks or Germans — who do not feel that they belong to their country's "intellectual elite".

Culture takes place and develops at all levels, not only at the so-called "higher" ones.

It's much too early to judge what the confrontation between the German industrialised society and the immigrant Turks will mean for the identity of both

groups. There are many religious and educational problems involved.

One thing is certain: culture withers if barriers are set up against everything which is "alien".

The Goths moved to the West, the Teutons to the South, the Romans found their way to the Mediterranean, we did the Greeks. The Arabs left their cultural marks in Spain and Italy. The Turks once got us fur as Vienna, now they're in Wanne-Eikell.

The history of the peoples of this world is the history of inter-mingling. No-one knows this better than those who come from Germany's Rhineland.

Carl Zuckmayer once wrote of them: "They were some of the best, my friend! The best in the world!"

"And why? Because they are a mixture. The peoples have mingled, just like the waters from the springs, brooks and rivers flow together into a mighty torrent."

This kind of mixture leads to the "identities" of the living present.

A century later, Hermann Hesse wrote: *Der Welkeist will nicht fesseln uns und engen / Er will uns stufenlos haben, weiten* (The Welkeist seeks not to limit and bind us/it lifts us step by step, extends our understanding).

And hasn't the Orient extended our understanding, that includes Germany's, over the past thousand and more years? *Ex oriente lux*. Let us look for "orientation".

## Exhibition reveals suffering art under Third Reich

such healthy public feeling, the label which led to the persecution and banning of many artists.

In 1962, as the defamatory exhibition "Degenerate Art" celebrated its 25th anniversary, there was a special review in Munich of the destruction of art by the Nazis.

Now, 50 years after the fateful year 1933, a number of towns and cities remind us of these acts of crime by the Nazi state. As in Hamburg in the *Kunsthaus*, there is a special exhibition on the occasion of the Church congress in Hanover ("Dictatorship in Art in the Third Reich", *Kunstverein*).

Anyone who wanders through other exhibitions in Hamburg and Hanover will find art which would have been and perhaps still is regarded as "degenerate" by "popular sentiment" and by the Nazi judges at the time. More so at any rate than the harmless Cubists and Expressionists.

The Hamburg Art Association is showing "Pictures of Death in Contemporary Art", including the controversial Beuys object "Show Your Wounds".

In the St. Katharine Church there is provocative contemporary presentations of the Last Supper.

Both exhibitions, unfortunately, will not receive the attention given the exhibition in Hanover.

The *Kunsthaus* in Hamburg and the

Christianity, for example, the trend toward university education in the Federal Republic of Germany is unbroken. Graduates as a portion of the working population increased from 2.9 per cent in 1961 to 6.1 per cent today.

Where do we find the source of this figure, based on research by the culture, folklore, medicine, and young man?

The architectural brilliance of the Chinese, the use of Arabic numerals with its "fairy-tale" beauty, the Orient.

The Crusaders brought us more highly qualified applicants. They ate ginger, honey and cakes (*Printen*, marzipan and syrup and rock candy).

Even the venerable imperial eagle was imported "alien" culture.

Just as were the Turkish *sec*, *mocha*, *ulchey*, *schm*, *1001 Nights*.

What would there be left of "alien" identity if it were not?

It is no coincidence that the paradise is associated with the "Orient" and its myths.

Nobody would have been so naive as the Golden Era is *Nebelheim*. Not even the Romantics.

Cultural identity of our nation has nearly quadrupled: from 1.1 million in 1960 to 4.4 million in 1981.

The more we open ourselves to others, remove barriers, but that which is "alien", the more we come to understand that cultural world are identical.

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger)

## EDUCATION

## Graduate unemployment a worsening problem

ble to branch out or establish a vocational qualification.

The first step Professor Berchem proposes is to reduce both the length of time it takes to complete a university course and the number of years spent at school before gaining university entrance qualifications from 13 to 12.

"Apart from the Federal Republic of Germany," he says, "as far as I know only Italy and a handful of Swiss cantons allow themselves the luxury of 13 years at school."

Add to this an average of five to six years at university and graduates in the Federal Republic will be seen, at 25 at least, to be definitely older than their counterparts elsewhere.

Professor Berchem outlined his further proposals in *Hochschulpolitische Informationen*, a higher education policy review.

After the 12th year of conventional schooling he would like to see students take a specialised 12-month pre-university course.

It would offset the loss of the final school year and prepare students for university education in much the same

way as used to be done in France, for example.

They would take a final exam qualifying them for university study, which would then come more easily than the present transition from school to university.

The first two years at university as envisaged by Professor Berchem would be a general course entitling students who pass to take up certain careers or embark on other, non-university courses leading to career qualifications.

Depending on examination performance he envisages three options from this point onward:

● The student fails to pass the exam despite the opportunity of retaking it and then leaves university.

● The student's pass grade does not entitle him to further study. He is awarded a diploma and may be allowed to take a further academic degree, but will then leave university with a career qualification.

● The pass grade is good enough to entitle the student to carry on at university to examinations comparable with the present degree finals.

Peter Philipps  
(Die Welt, 8 June 1983)

## Less red tape, smaller schools wanted

their lessons together as a class, and thereafter at least a third.

Dr Buch feels it is important for pupils to feel they have a classroom of their own. This sense of "ownership" tends to prevent vandalism.

The system of form masters must, he feels, be retained to ensure a steady educational relationship. This apparently would mean staff would need to be qualified to teach more than two subjects.

He calls to mind with approval the old custom of teachers visiting their pupils' homes. Special counselling facilities should be provided: not to make the teacher's job easier but to promote educational ties with his pupils.

More intensive cooperation between teachers is expected to make them critically conscious members of staff with

Discounting military service the graduate would be 21 on taking his first university exams and could embark on a career in the public service or private enterprise at a much earlier age than today's graduates.

Above all, he would do so without having invested an inordinate amount of time and economic wastage in this education.

Students who stayed on at university would, like their French counterparts, graduate at roughly 23.

Professor Berchem admits that at first glance this arrangement would seem to hit hard the students who were sent down after their first exam.

But, as he puts it: "If there is to be a process of selection that relieves the burden on the universities and spares those affected the difficulties they would otherwise face two or three years later this procedure seems to me more humane than the current intermediate exam that leaves the student empty-handed if he fails it and has to leave university."

His proposals must be seen against the background of more than one school-leaver in three gaining university entrance qualifications by the mid-1990s.

If this happens, he (and by no means he alone) concludes, change will be indispensable at school and university, and the sooner they are introduced the better.

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 8 June 1983)

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There is no such thing in the Federal Republic of Germany as a specialist for "intensive" medical treatment.

If most doctors have their way, this is not likely to change in the immediate future. They are against further fragmentation and sub-division of interdisciplinary aspects of medicine.

This does not mean that there is no need for special branches of research and discussion on these subjects.

A recent international symposium on the problems facing emergency and intensive medicine provided an opportunity for experts to air their opinions.

This was the fourth meeting of its kind organised in alternation each year by a joint work-ground made up of medical experts from Münster and Munich. This time there were participants from 16 countries.

Professor Peter Lewin from the Clinic for Anaesthesiology and Operative Intensive Medicine at the Westphalian Wilhelms University in Münster and Professor Klaus Peter from the Ludwig Maximilians University in Munich had chosen the subject "Machine Respiration Past - Present - Future" as the leitmotif for the congress.

It was confirmed that more technological and mechanical complexity with regard to the respiration machines only holds promise of therapeutic success in about 15 per cent of cases treated.

The price paid for such success, which all too often shows the dehumanised side of medicine, is public criticism of the motto *in dubio pro vita*, which in many cases is too rigidly respected.

The medical experts argue against such criticism and show that they too have learnt a great deal from the overall discussion on intensive-care treatment.

The sedation that is, the medicine of quieting-down, of the lung patient

## MEDICINE

### Doctors breathe deep over the success syndrome

during short-term or long-term therapy is no longer regarded as the ultimate.

There is reference to the weakening of the lung's musculature via sedation. Doctors, therefore, now prefer the patient to consciously experience the illness and consciously support its cure.

There is a growing awareness among medical experts of the importance of psychological care and support.

In a special study-group on the back-up measures to respiration treatment, the representatives of the nursing staff introduced a further aspect.

For those who look after the patients, an alert and responsive patient is more "attractive", or at least receives greater attention and care. This in turn has a positive effect on the healing process.

What trends have been observed by the medical experts from the USA, Poland, West Germany, East Germany, Australia, Sweden or the Netherlands, to mention just a few countries represented at the congress?

Professor Lewin referred to the enormously "dramatic" developments in the field of artificial respiration techniques since the iron lung was constructed by the New York physiologists, Drinker and Shaw, in 1929.

Its pump was able at the time to develop a water column of up to 60 centimetres of positive or negative pressure, at a frequency of between 10 and 40 a minute.

In Germany, the Dräger Iron Lung was used frequently during the polio epidemics of the fifties.

However, this method was no solution to the problems of long-term respiration. New methods of cannulation of the airways paved the way for the now accepted and standardised approach of positive compression respiration.

Research in recent years has not been satisfied with developments. In too many cases, the lung turned out to be the "target organ" for other illnesses (for example peritonitis or the effects of delayed shock).

Without treatment of the primary illness, therapeutic success was unattainable.

The "aggressive," i.e. heavy-pressure treatment of such secondary symptoms, medical experts talk of the adult respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS), would only continue damaging the lungs. This may then result in fistulae or tearing of the lung.

Experts at the congress primarily see two "alternatives" for respiration treatment in future: extracorporeal circulation and high-frequency respiration.

The first approach to treatment was prepared by the German pioneer of heart-lung therapy, Prof. Lunkenheimer, and represented by Dr. Guttinoni from Milan.

It's aim is to replace lung respiration by means of an artificial exchange of gas in the patient's blood outside of the patient's body.

This mechanical artificial circulation using a heart-lung machine requires a great deal of mechanical apparatus and nursing personnel. It is also problematic with regard to possible infection and blood coagulation.

The operation theatre has to be sterile and perfect conditions. Perhaps it was inevitable that things became more modern and more expensive.

But what about human beings? Only thing which seems to be a human body and not a machine. The body has to be used.

However, the answer is a dilemma: medical and technical progress together.

Such hospitals were created mainly by public demand for treatment.

A sick person should be able to receive the best treatment possible. But what about human beings? Modern life hospital, the best treatment.

So it is the patients who must be their ways. They must begin to value a comforting doctor's touch more than expensive medicine.

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tic with regard to possible infection and blood coagulation.

High-frequency treatment, on the other hand, sounds much more experimentally backed.

The principle here is based on the normal respiration frequency with a corresponding volume of air involved.

The result: the individual's breathing is less, the medium pressure is constant and the ventilation is stabilised.

The internationally unique computer-controlled programme developed in Münster also offers advantages.

Highly-complicated electrical, about the size of two metal, allows a synthetic breathing to be established, which is tailored to the individual patient.

Hermann Sch... (Frankfurter Rundschau)

### Why hospitals have become health factories

Rapid and sweeping changes have turned friendly hospitals into health factories.

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## MODERN LIVING

### Acrid smell of arson clogs insurance nostrils

There are plans to make claimants pay the first DM300 themselves to stem the tide of claims for theft.

Crime on the high seas has worried marine insurance companies for the past eight years. The switch in merchant shipping from traditional seafaring nations to other ports and the arrival of many developing countries on the scene have changed yardsticks.

Little is left of what used to be known as *christliche Seefahrt*, or Christian shipping. Ships are reported sunk and surface to ply the seas under a new name.

Freighters with what is claimed to have been valuable cargo (but was taken on board in conditions of cloak-and-dagger secrecy) somehow happen to vanish without trace where the oceans are deepest.

The growth in fraudulent claims can no longer merely be explained in cyclical terms. The change is clearly one that is more fundamental in nature.

Insurance companies take on a buffer function by settling claims for damage in respect of criminal activities. They are tacitly redistributing substantial sums of money.

People tend to forget that this contributes toward peace and quiet in public life.

If people could not feel sure the insurance would settle a claim after a break-

in or a fire they would be inclined to take more drastic action.

They would arguably convert their homes into castles and keep guns handy by the bedside.

How long, one wonders, can insurance companies maintain this compensatory role? How long, for that matter, are policyholders going to pay the extra that is the result of crime?

An entire package of measures is probably needed to cope with the problem. Insurers must certainly insist on policyholders taking greater precautions.

This is the context in which making claimants foot part of the bill must be considered. People who know the insurance will not cover the first so-and-so many hundred marks of a claim are bound to be more careful.

The companies for their part must be more careful who they do new business with. Their determination to line up new customers and boost turnover at all costs has at times made them blind to the risks.

Stricter screening of would-be new clients is needed to rule out risks that might be considered in any way shady.

Insurance companies are usually the first to clamour for more effort to be devoted to fighting crime, although the thought does not usually occur to them until it is a matter of insurance frauds.

But this is a much wider issue that probably calls for sweeping changes in social policy.

What importance ought to be attached to the protection of the individual and his property from criminal acts in our society? That is the wider issue which is at stake.

Arno Surminski (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 23 May 1983)

A New York court has ruled that landlords need allow only members of tenants' families to live in rented accommodation.

They can throw out anyone else. Thousands of New Yorkers who live with common law husbands, wives or partners (or simply friends who live together) are worried they now might be evicted.

Falling that they could well find themselves hit by hefty rent increases. Tenants' associations are raising Cain. What likelihood is there of a similar ruling in Germany?

Unless all the signs are deceptive any such fears are unfounded. At present the law in Germany is tending to move in the other direction.

If you want to share your home with a friend you can usually do so regard-

### When tenants can stay put and ignore the landlord

less whether the landlord is happy with the arrangement.

Even the Supreme Land Court in Hamm, Westphalia, which is not normally known for firebrand rulings, recently decided that:

"A justified interest on the tenant's part in giving a home to another person exists when for personal reasons the tenant wants to live together with a person of the same sex or for economic reasons would like to share the apartment."

Only in exceptional circumstances is the landlord entitled to reject the extra person. There are three categories to which the courts regularly refer in this context.

● The new tenant gives ground for rejection by disturbing the peace. No landlord need tolerate a chronic alcoholic who comes home night after night singing at the top of his voice as he staggers up the stairs.

● The apartment is overcrowded or subjected to a lot of wear and tear as a result of the newcomers. A single mother with three children in a two-roomed apartment cannot take in her boyfriend against the landlord's will.

● The landlord lives in the same block. In this case, as close neighbours, the tenant must be particularly careful. Someone who lives in the upstairs apartment in his landlord's home is more likely to have trouble with the landlord in this context than someone who lives in an apartment block managed by some property company or other.

Even so, the open mind shown by the German Supreme Court on common law marriages is shown by other rulings besides the one cited.

So there is no immediate likelihood of a repeat of the situation in New York.

Eva Marie von Münch (Die Zeit, 10 June 1983)

### Stores try and clamp down as theft hits epidemics levels

Shopping has become an epidemic in affluent society like Germany, with more and more people stealing.

Shops and stores are continually testing protection systems and prosecuting offenders. That is as far as the retailers can legally go; the rest is up to the police.

Many supermarkets and hypermarkets are no longer prepared to let matters rest there. They started making random bag checks which they have no right to do.

They can only ask someone to reveal contents of a shopping bag if the good reason for suspecting theft.

Retail Trade Association in Cologne will hear nothing of spot checks.

Criminal code regulations say that only judges, public prosecutors and police officers from a certain rank upwards are entitled to make spot checks.

Shopkeepers may be aggrieved at dishonesty but they would be well advised not to overstep the mark.

Customers who feel unfairly suspected could well take store managers and proprietors to court, with the resulting adverse publicity.

Shops would do better to provide lockers or wardrobe facilities for customers' shopping bags - properly insured, of course.

But the customers are still not obliged to take kindly to the idea.

(Central-Adresser Bonn, 26 May 1983)

### Despair drives more children to kill themselves

Every fourth German child has at some time toyed with the idea of committing suicide. The number who actually do is rising.

According to calculations by the Director of the Würzburg University Clinic for Child and Youth Psychiatry, Professor Gerhard Nissen, suicides by children aged between 10 and 15 increased by almost 25 per cent between 1971 and 1981.

The increase was 10 per cent over the same period for teenagers between 15 and 20.

The suicide figure for youngsters has increased at a much faster rate than for adults, says the child safety committee in Munich.

Between 1971 and 1981, suicides by adults rose by 5.5 per cent.

In a survey on depressive children, Nissen discovered that of the one in four children and teenagers who had thought about committing suicide, 30 per cent had actually attempted it.

He warns: "Every attempted suicide by a child or a teenager, even if it is almost playfully and superficially carried out, represents a signal which should be taken seriously."

A disturbing picture is presented by official suicide statistics. The number of suicides among children in 1981 increased to 105 (78 in the previous year). The number of teenager suicides rose from 425 (1980) to 544 in 1981.

Suicide is the fourth most frequent cause of death among children, and indeed the second most frequent among teenagers.

Professor Nissen also pointed out how difficult it is sometimes to distinguish between a genuine suicide attempt and an accident. This would suggest that the real number of suicides is much higher.

Suicide attempts symptoms were a social illness created by society itself.

Suicide rates have traditionally been the highest in West Germany, East Germany, Switzerland, Sweden and Hungary, regardless of the political system in these countries.

Even drug abuse can be regarded as "long-term (self-) poisoning," i.e. as a chronic suicide attempt, Nissen emphasised.

Many attempts to commit suicide were marked by demonstrative and serious elements, so that they become a kind of "Russian roulette."

There are age-specific differences in the choice of the means to commit suicide.

Boys and youths show greater aggressivity in the choice of their suicidal "weapons," whereas the girls and young women prefer less brutal methods.

Most young males die via hanging, strangulation or suffocation, whereas

the young females more frequently take poison.

The fact that many suicides were due to depressions was reason enough for Nissen to demand greater treatment for suicide-prone children and teenagers.

Above all, the prevention of psychological misdevelopment and a more careful psychiatric diagnosis are steps in the right direction. They should be backed by more advisory services for parents and help in individual cases.

The ability to judge whether a young person is likely to commit suicide is one of the most difficult tasks facing a doctor.

Fridolin Engelfried (Nürnberger Nachrichten, 7 June 1983)

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